

# Mobility Committee Meeting Transcript – 05/28/2020

Title: City of Austin

Channel: 6 - COAUS

Recorded On: 5/28/2020 6:00:00 AM

Original Air Date: 5/28/2020

Transcript Generated by SnapStream

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[10:05:44 AM]

>> Kitchen: I see the mayor pro tem is back now. We'll go ahead and get started. I'm going to call the meeting of the mobility committee to order at 10 can 05:00. And our first order of business is to approve the minutes from the meeting held on April 30th. So I see a motion from the mayor pro tem to move approval. I see a second from vice chair councilmember Flannigan. All in favor please raise your hands. Okay, we passed that unanimously. So the first item that we have today is a presentation from atd on the citywide speed management program. We do have a couple of speakers. We have three speakers that wanted to speak on this item. So I'm going to call them first and then we'll hear from staff.

[10:06:44 AM]

So the first person is Hayden walker. Hayden, can you hear us? Are you on the line?

>> I am, councilmember. Can you hear me?

>> Kitchen: Yes, we can hear you.

>> Great. Thank you very much for allowing me to speak. This is Hayden blackwalker. I just wanted to speak for a second in support of speed management. I think that this is a really great proposal. We all know the difference between a minor injury and a serious injury and even a fatality, a big portion of that is speed. You guys don't need me to remind you how many people die or are seriously injured in Austin every year, and I guess what I just wanted to say was with covid-19 being so chaotic and it's so hard to know what to do to keep people safe and we've just opened our lives trying to figure that out. And with traffic violence, it's a similar kind of

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health crisis. People die regularly every year in Austin for no reason and in this particular case with traffic, we have a lot of great data, a lot of great research. We know how to actually fix this problem. And so I wanted to commend staff for all of their hard work in doing engineering studies and applying a lot of really great research and data to solving this problem in our community, and I just hope that this committee is able to send a recommendation forward to the full council to recommend approval. Thank you so much. Have a good day.

>> Kitchen: Thank you. Our next speaker is Jay crossly.

>> Hello, councilmembers. Thanks so much for everything you guys do and for this time. I'm executive director of a non-profit called farm and city and I live in district

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4. And I just wanted to be strongly in support of this speed management program as the staff has proposed. As Hayden said, speed is one of the major problems that's killing people on our streets. And I just wanted to add basically all the acronyms across the nation, the nixs, the nsc, nacdo and nato, the engineering entities have changed the way we think about streets and speed over the last ten years and I continue to get reports how we made lots of mistakes and designed for high speed and that killed people. And so what we are doing is what the traffic engineering world is now saying we must do everywhere, and one thing to share is it's important that Austin was one of the first cities to get a training, a technical assistance from the ite, the

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national -- the institute for traffic engineers on rethinking speed management. And also the Texas strategic highway safety plan calls for local governments to do this kind of thing of reforming speed management. In some ways Austin is leading the state but doing what our state plan says cities should do. And so I strongly am in support of this and am very excited you guys support it. And I do want to question, I hope that council can strongly support Thissen a make it very clear that we want to make a comfortable speed on all our transportation systems, the safe speed. And to think about projects like the major corridors project and the burnet road proposals or the red bud bridge, are they designed for the right speed and can we make it clear to staff that we want to design

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things to make it comfortably to drive safely. So thank you very much.

>> Kitchen: Our last speaker is Adam Greenfield.

>> Yes, I'm here. Can you hear me?

>> Kitchen: Yes.

>> Hi, good morning, committee members, councilmembers. My name is Adam Greenfield, I'm board president of walk Austin, and I'm also here to speak strongly in support of this proposed speed management program. Safe mobility around Austin really should be a guarantee offered by local government, and unfortunately last year alone we saw almost 90 people die on the street of Austin. This is an ongoing emergency. Slowing traffic down is going to save lives, and frankly it's also going to

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make Austin a lot more pleasant and livable and give people more choices about how they want to move around be it walking, bike, rolling or otherwise. This -- this is really an historic measure I think by any account, and I really commend the hard work put in to make this happen by the vision zero program and other city staff and by advocates to get us to this point. And yeah, I look forward to the mobility committee recommending that the full city council approve this landmark measure. Thanks very much.

>> Kitchen: Would staff like to present? We're now ready for the presentation if staff would like to proceed. Thank you to all of our speakers.

[10:12:52 AM]

>> Can you hear me?

>> Kitchen: Yes.

>> Okay, great. Well, thank you, councilmembers, for having us here this morning to present Austin transportation department's studies and recommended speed limit modifications. I'm Eric bollock. I'm joined by Louis Leff, transportation safety officer, and we also have Anna martin and gym Dale, two of our assistant directors on the line. Next slide. Namely the office of the city traffic engineer within atd for speeds on streets in Austin should be achieved to a safe and prudent speed. This determination is based on a comprehensive years-long engineering study of the city streets. Next slide.

[10:13:54 AM]

Slide 3, the presentation will cover the speed management program including its mission and objective and will also cover the methodology we use and the engineering studies to develop findings and recommendations, and finally we'll present next steps and will present for our recommended findings. Slide 4. Speed programs are being developed, but for Austin our program aims to improve safety and livability of our streets by implementing strategies appropriate to meet the context of each street. And we recognize that the same strategy might not be needed for all situations. And the program's objective is to reduce likelihood of serious injury and fatal crashes by reducing speeding on all types of streets. Particularly those with the high speeds as we know that speeding is the leading contributing factor to these types of crashes. Now I'll turn it over to Louis to discuss our best

[10:14:55 AM]

practices.

>> Thank you. Councilmembers, can you hear me okay?

>> Yes, go ahead.

>> Kitchen: Yes, we --

>> On slide 5 --

[inaudible]. In taking this holistic view of the transportation network and how we might improve interactions, infrastructure, law enforcement aspects and public education and more. The human body's tolerance to the force of a crash is what the [inaudible] Severity outcome for people involved. The fundamental -- is reducing the speed at which drivers choose to operate their vehicles in order to reduce that crash force. This can include policy changes, lower speed limits, engineering treatments, education and enforcement of driver behavior. There's always discussion about whether on the ground engineering treatments or speed limits should be

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implemented first -- hundreds of miles of streets faster than we can do the engineering treatments of the same scale. Speeding is just one of four driver behaviors that contributes to most of our injury crashes and it's documented on a quarter of our fatal crashes. Speeds play a role in crashes even when it doesn't meet the factor on a crash report. We'll be speaking about data and numbers so we always try to remind those listening this is about the health and safety of actual people in our community. We have over 500 crashes a year where a mother or father, friend or neighbor is seriously injured or killed. Our vision zero program also uses [inaudible] Years of life lost to demonstrate how most of the preventable crashes and deaths have taken life away in these car crashes. These brothers and sisters, grandparents and children will not be present at birthdays, graduations or holidays ever again, so last year alone our community lost an estimated 3100 years of life due to car crashes. Slide 6, please.

[10:17:01 AM]

Slide 6 shows the research completed in recent years have made it increasingly clear how critical managing speed is. Planners and engineers started this process last spring with review of available information related to the impact of speeds on human bodies, speed limit settings and recommended best practices. The national transportation board -- in two ways. Increases the likelihood of being involved in a crash and severity of injuries. At a state level, the highway association recommended in a report that localities should set speed limits when there's a mix of vulnerable users and vulnerable traffic. Here in Texas as reference 9 earlier, txdot has been working on a new state target of zero deaths. That effort includes a speeding lane strategy that encourages use of target speeds for arterials, collectors and local roadways taking into

[10:18:01 AM]

consideration pedestrian and -- target speeds of 35 miles or less on arterials and adjusting speed limits. We're really comfortable in our approach been informed by the state and best practices for setting appropriate speed limits. Back to you, Eric.

>> Thanks, Louis. Looking at slide 7 now, I just want to spend some time to give an overview of our engineering methodology. Really focused primarily on the prevailing operating speed of streets which is typically the 85 per seen tile -- this is based on the premise that drivers under unimpeded free-flowing traffic conditions choose to travel at safe and prudent speeds for themselves and others using the street. However, research indicates that over time this methodology has catered to higher speed and really has a limitation in urban

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settings for -- all of which impede the natural flow of traffic and poor attention of drivers to operate safely. Many of Austin streets share these characteristics which is by following this historic methodology can be frustrating in looking for ways to comprehensively analyze characteristics that lead to decreased safety. I should note that in Texas engineers have historically followed the manual titled procedures for establishing speed Zones published by txdot, the Texas department of transportation, which in turn takes guidance from the federal level. This manual does include a handful of other considerations. However, it really does not provide clear guidance on how these other

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considerations should be evaluated in a consistent manner to recommend safe and prudent speed limits. At evaluated speed limits, namely expert systems are knowledge based approaches for recommending enforceable and credible speed limits. The federal highway administration has developed a web based tool called U.S. Limits toen an in corporates both the consideration in the historic speed limit methodology along with ten others, some of which are listed on this slide. We in atd use this tool because it's methodology backed by the federal level to consistently evaluate our urban environment along with other considerations that have always been available under state guidance. Next slide. The next part of the presentation will be specific to our recommendations on Austin urban core streets. The office of the city traffic engineer has the authority to recommend speed limits based on engineering study derived from state and

[10:21:06 AM]

local codes. As we know, Austin has experienced decades of double digit population growth which creates population density and changed our operating characteristics during the urban core. Atd focused on higher speeds, those that represent the most serious injuries and fatalities. This image on the right show how speeds just above 30 miles per hour, crashes with pedestrians have more than a 50% chance of resulting in a serious injury or fatality. Ultimately we at atd collected speed and control data on 80% of the urban core network which we found representative of the entire network based on statistical analysis of collective data. I'll turn it back to Louis one more time to present more on the urban core network.

>> Thank you, Eric. Slide 9, please. So the Austin strategic mobility plan analysis on

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most recent five-year to understand where most of the non-freeway serious injuries and fatalities. That analysis resulted in development of a high injury network will be found in just 8% of street network represents 70% of serious injuries and fatalities. Slide 10, please. You can see this network geographically. One considers the consistent type of growth that has occurred particularly in central Austin in recent years, it's evident there's more [inaudible] Corridors, posted speed limits were set years ago. You will see just over half of the street lane miles associated with the network are represented in this area as designed by [inaudible]. South and U.S. 183 on the east and north. Our team studying these streets applied this methodology and developed that's recommendations which in part aim to achieve more

[10:23:08 AM]

consistent speed limits. What we received comments some feedback had been we should have included more

[inaudible] Of the arterial streets. We started here with this broad based approach and new methodology. Back to you.

>> Thank you, Louis. Looking at slide 11, before I cover the recommendations for the urban core, I just want to highlight atd did take speed limit production recommendations to city council which were adopted last September and these were actually higher speed streets and the culture part of the city. This was our first use of the U.S. Limits to expert system methodology and laid the ground work for this larger recommendation included in this presentation today. Next slide. Looking at slide 12, as recommendation for the city's urban core streets,

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office of the city traffic engineer has determined a 35-mile-an-hour speed limit should be established for most streets in this area. A few exceptions are included in the table shown on slide 12 which indicate reductions to 30 miles per hour or reductions down to 40 or 45. Again, this is based on our engineering studies, operating characteristics and context appropriateness. Next slide. Slide 13, the image on the left shows streets with existing speed limits of 35 miles per hour or below in Orange. Then the image on the right shows how speed limits in the urban core would change with approval of these recommendations. One major outcome highlighted this would produce consistent speed limits based on similar operating streets thereby giving drivers consistent expectations of speed limits within the urban core. Ultimately this lowers the speed limits on about 20% of street lane miles in the high injury network. Next slide. Slide 14, so now we'll shift

[10:25:09 AM]

our recommendation on Austin's residential streets. For the purpose of our study we define them as non-major streets with some portion of adjacent or side facing residences. We sampled data on approximately 600 streets and ran a statistical analysis on a sample and determined our speed data was representative of operations of similar residential streets citywide. Next slide. Slide 15, the data indicates prevailing speeds increase nearly linearly which is intuitive and drivers are influenced by the environment such as on-street park, driveway conflicts and eventual cues. Allow yield slow operations meaning drivers are required to slow and allow on coming vehicles to pass when encountered. Next slide. On 16, as the first recommendation for the city's residential streets, we actually have two parts. First streets less than

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36 feet wide and having front-facing residences, speed limits should be set to 25 miles per hour citywide. Residential streets between 36 and 40 feet wide, we recommend have the authority to establish a 25-mile-an-hour speed limit if determined to be safe and prudent based on individual engineering evaluations or implementation of speed mitigation measures or traffic control devices. Next slide. Slide 17, we have an image on the left which shows residential streets with existing 25-mile-an-hour speed limits in blue while the image on the right shows how speed limits would change with approval of these recommendations. As you can see, this recommendation results in a comprehensive and consistent 25-mile-an-hour speed limit for most of Austin's residential streets. Next slide. Slide 18, during the process of this study, atd recognized the opportunity and need to analyze residential streets which wouldn't meet the criteria

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for speed modifications under our recommendation that we just went over. Atd identified about 45 miles of residential streets needing analysis which have some portion of adjacent or side-facing residential lane use, existing speed limits greater than 35 miles per hour or greater than 35 feet wide. Next slide. Slide 19. The second recommendation for residential streets including lowering speed limits on 18 particular streets to be consistent with other residential streets of similar operating characteristics that don't meet the criteria recommendation 1. Most of them lowered to 30 miles per hour, some lowered to 35 miles per hour. Next slide. Slide 20, our final speed limit recommendations pertain to downtown core streets which we define as those included within north Lamar, martin Luther king, I've 35 and lady bird lake. The downtown core is the oldest part of the city

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built primarily on a grade layout. These streets generally have lower prevailing speeds because they are controlled by traffic signals, speeds all wayings stops. For slide 21 for the downtown car, we recommend speed limits be set to 25 miles per hour. Lamar, Guadalupe, lavaca and martin Luther king should remain at 30 miles per hour, however. But also 15th street and Cesar Chavez should be heard from 35 miles per hour to 30 miles per hour. Finally signal timings in in network should be reviewed and adjusted to facilitate the 25-mile-an-hour operation to align with the

[inaudible] Speed limit. Next slide. Slide 22, the image on the left we see shows existing speed limits within the downtown core which are mostly 30 miles per hour as shown in green. The image on the right shows the blue how speed limits would change to 25 miles per hour on those streets with

[10:29:13 AM]

approval of recommendation. This will help meet our goal in establishing consistent speed limits while providing safer streets particularly in this area of the city that has higher concentration of pedestrians and micro mobility users. Next slide. Slide 23, today we're here at mobility committee for briefing and discussion and we also briefed the urban transportation commission a couple weeks ago and plan to take our recommendation to the full city council at the June 11th meeting. Atd is also developing a fine installation plan that will include design, placement and enforcement of speed limit signs. One design for residential streets is shown here which could be placed at entrances for neighborhoods to establish 25-mile-an-hour speed limits without having to sign each impacted street. For urban core streets we're exploring sign design which will be equally noticed and

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observable. Prioritization, we can follow documented crash history and tools. But above all we would take a phased approach of installation over time to eventually reach all streets covered under these recommendations based on available budget. And finally, atd's review of best practices revealed comprehensive modifications are most effective when coupled with public awareness efforts. They help reach a broad audience with a focused and consistent message bringing attention to the purpose and desired outcomes of speed limit modification. Atd is developing this public awareness effort with our public information team and also with Austin police department on the enforcement side. I want to conclude by saying that speed limit modifications recommended in this engineering study are the result of a comprehensive years-long engineering study of streets in Austin. I really feel it is Progressive and bold approach based on national best practice to modernize speed limits on hundreds of

[10:31:16 AM]

miles of streets with primary goals being to reduce serious injuries and fatalities, part of our mission zero goal, speed is a major contributing factor.

[Inaudible] Based on characteristics shared by streets citywide, setting expectations for drivers and other street users, and also will provide streets with lower speeds to be more conducive to non-motorized traffic. Our data and research indicate streets are safe for all users and this was true before our covid crisis, but help create equity for all users and healthier communities. Next slide. Thank you, this concludes our presentation. We're here and available for questions.

>> Kitchen: Thank you very much. I'm very appreciative and impressed by this effort. So appreciate you bringing this to us.

[10:32:17 AM]

Thank you for joining us, mayor Adler. I can see you are here. And I can see everybody's hands so we'll start with councilmember Flannigan.

>> Flannigan: Thanks, Ann. Some clarifying questions that I saw on the map, but it's a little confusing because there's a section of the presentation that talks about the downtown core and residential streets. So we are talking about residential streets citywide.

>> That is correct. When we talk about residential streets, that is citywide.

>> Flannigan: Okay. Do you have an assessment of how many of the high injury roads are also an active capital project either under the 2016 bonds or campo or txdot? Because some of those lines are txdot facilities, et cetera. Do you have a sense of how much of those high capacity roads are already slated and approved for capital improvement?

[10:33:17 AM]

>> I don't think I have the information right offhand, but, you know, in terms of the city's capital mobility corridors, certainly Lamar and burnet are two that stand out. Airport is another one. The ones offhand that come to mind.

>> Flannigan: And it would be interesting for the public to understand that we're not just lowering speed limits. Like this is a great thing. I should have started with that. This is awesome, a really good thing to move forward. It's also good for the public to see this lined up with all the other capital projects lined up underway. Almost every line that's on the citywide map in my district is an active capital project. Rather than the community think, well, they are not doing anything in these outer areas on these major streets, actually we're reconstructing them in many cases or we've got an active project with txdot like Parmer lane or sidewalks on Mcneil which are all streets in my district. That would be helpful information if it's not too

[10:34:18 AM]

laborious to put together before the 11th.

>> [Inaudible]

>> Flannigan: The last question, the urban core boundary is I think somewhat arbitrary and do you have a plan -- is there a schedule for how that analysis is going to roll out kind of north and south of that boundary?

>> We don't necessarily have a plan at this time. We wanted to focus on urban core and only in the sense that it does overlap greatly with the high injury network. We thought that was a good place to start. They sort of have similar characteristics that might not be shared with streets outside of the urban core, but certainly we'll work on, you know, expanding our analysis as we're able to and, you know, evaluating, you know, the impacts of this current recommendation within the urban core and kind of learning what we can from that and taking it farther out.

>> Flannigan: Yeah, I would like to see a more

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kind of formal intention to expand this work, and I understand what you're saying about the road characteristics, but when you look at, like, burnet road just south of 183 or Lamar north of 1834, I don't think there's a substantially different character stake, but there is a different community that lives around it. I think we need to acknowledge that there might be an equity challenge if we're including that part of burnet but not including part of Lamar where there's very different demographic being served.

>> Uh-huh.

>> Kitchen: I would like to just echo what councilmember Flannigan said. I would like to see a more formal time line, and I would prefer that it not wait until after you've made changes in the urban core and done an analysis. Because as councilmember Flannigan said, I think that

[10:36:21 AM]

urban core is somewhat arbitrary and we did see -- we have seen from the mapping there are high injury network roads that are not in the urban core. So soul Ellis, I -- councilmember Ellis?

>> Ellis: Thank you, I think this is a great step forward and I'm really excited to see a very focused effort on how to improve traffic safety. I thought for a while that having all these increments of five make things not intuitive and not necessarily consistent and predictable which I really appreciate you using those words because that's a sentiment I felt for a long time. The more that we can create predictability, you know, a highway speed, an arterial speed, an interior neighborhood street and really knowing if people understand the expectation is 25 citywide in neighborhoods, it creates a better practice and habit for drivers on our streets to not necessarily have to

[10:37:21 AM]

wait for the next sign to understand how fast they should be going, and so I think if we could keep that in mind too in the engineering analysis, I think it will help create most more predictable expectations for our drivers in Austin. So I just wanted to put that out there because I understand the math that goes into engineering, but I think also we can be very predictable with what the expectations are, that can be helpful in accomplishing these goals.

>> Thank you.

>> Kitchen: Thank you. Other questions that folks have? Councilmember alter?

>> Alter: Adjust want to clarify because I'm a little bit confused on how this is applying across the city. It still says residential streets and downtown core as we go lower, but I thought you said all residential streets were changing. I'd like a little bit more clarity. On that.

[10:38:22 AM]

>> Sure.

>> Alter: I understand it makes sense to have a particular study for the urban core for downtown and make changes there, but seemed like we were also doing more and I'm confused as to how this is applying.

>> Okay. So the -- some of the residential streets are recommendations do apply citywide. Based on you are on data that we have, we were able to collect data citywide on all types of residential streets, you know with various street widths. And it's pretty consistent in confirming that citywide based on the operating and design characteristics of residential streets that we saw similar speed, similar behaviors so we felt comfortable making recommendations citywide as applied to residential streets. The urban core, these are more major streets. What we call level 3 streets in the Austin strategic mobility plan. Again, they overlap with the

[10:39:24 AM]

high injury network for the most part and they also have similar characteristics in that, you know, they are more in the denser part of town and have similar operating characteristics. As recommendations apply to the urban core, these are for the non-residential streets bounded by 183, mow back and Ben white. And I guess you can think of the sort of the downtown core as a subset of the urban core in that this is a set of streets that has similar operations and designs, it's more built on a grid, you know, similar block lengths, so we were able to determine based on those streets and this sort of [inaudible] Overall streets within the urban core that we were comfortable setting these at 25 miles per hour.

>> Alter: Okay, then, if you look at recommendation 2 on slide 19, what were the

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criteria that -- so they didn't meet the recommendation 1 criteria of being 36 feet or less or being between 36 feet and 40? So they were wider than 40 feet, is that how they were on there, but yet you felt like they should have a reduction in speed and they were in the urban core?

>> That's correct. So yeah, so these are particular residential streets that might not necessarily fall within the urban core. But they are generally those that are 36 feet wide or wider and have existing speed limits of sometimes greater than 35 miles per hour even. And so they fall under residential streets, but they do not meet the criteria of being less than 36 feet wide and always having front-facing residential streets. So yeah, so just to clarify

[10:41:30 AM]

slide 19, this is sort of a second recommendation under the residential streets umbrella, during our process we recognized these streets stood out at sort of if you want to use the word anomaly, but really inconsistent speed limits as city -- peers around the city.

>> Alter: As you are aware, we've had some serious speed challenges on Mesa and Jester and I would like to see how this is applied for those streets. So maybe we can have that conversation with my office afterwards. I think this is really important that we do this with thinking about speed and I appreciate this as one of the many steps we're taking to reduce speeds. It does seem like this would be more effective with some

[10:42:30 AM]

traffic enforcement or speed enforcement. What are the plans for, you know, when we educate people without enforcement piece? Because absent that enforcement, it doesn't really matter what speed is posted for a lot of folks right now.

>> Yes, we are working with the police department, maybe Louis can give a little more information. We might have the commander on the line too. I'm not sure if he was able to join us, maybe add a little more information regarding the enforcement part of things.

>> Good morning. This is commander

[inaudible] Enforcement. We are going to work with atd and as we start rolling out the new speed limit signs, the enforcement is going to be basically folks on directed patrols with education and awareness of the change. And then as -- after about a

[10:43:31 AM]

month or two, then start working into the actual enforcement of writing citations. And we're going to work closely with them using the motorists during the day and also working with the patrol to make sure everybody is aware of the new changes so we can have a concerted effort citywide.

>> Alter: I mean I think that's a great aspiration, I'm just concerned where the manpower comes when over and over again we're not getting directed patrols when they are requested and there's no speed enforcement at all happen. So how --

>> Well, right now --

>> Alter: How are we allocating resources to that or what is happening in that regard?

>> With the covid situation, we have had to relook at, you know, trying to minimize exposure to our officers, but we are right now working

[10:44:31 AM]

speed enforcement on a lot of the high-speed roadways right now. I do have our motorists that work through the day, they are here Monday through Saturday, and then we're also using patrol to set aside time for at least two officers per shift for two hours to work directed patrols in the high-crash areas and also up on the high-speed roadways. And we still have our step programs working too for speed enforcement.

>> Alter: Okay, I -- I would like to make sure we do have resources in there because it doesn't seem like there's much change and it may not be that we want to do tickets right away and more education, of course, but if there are no cops around, it's not going to -- I don't think it's going to be -- I don't think it will be adopted as quickly as it might otherwise and so that's a concern of mine. When does this go into

[10:45:32 AM]

effect? If it passes on June 11th, when would it go into effect? I think for Eric.

>> So essentially, yeah, when council changes the ordinance. It's more or less in effect up until we are able to post the signs with the new speed limits. That's per state law, that's the final leg of having enforceable speed limits. So as part of our roll-out, if you will, we'll be installing signs in targeted areas and eventually citywide, but it will be a phased approach based on our ability of staff and budget.

>> Alter: Okay. Thank you.

>> Kitchen: Questions? Mayor pro tem, questions?

>> Garza: Not so I guess a question -- sorry if I missed this, but I think Paige and I -- councilmember

[10:46:33 AM]

Ellis and I were able to take a cycling trip once and they were able to like delineate speed by the road, so people knew if they were going over, like, not cobblestone, but brick, it was educational but they knew a different road and I assume that would be expensive obviously, would cost a the look of money, but I wonder if we've thought about color coding as a way? As we were talking I googled trying to remember what the different color codes and I was reminded by the maps you presented and was able to read studies when people are given sub conscious reminders that may not just be in the numbers. Knowing you are in a blue zone now and maybe that's the sign that says 25 also has blue and we're able to

[10:47:35 AM]

to blue parts of the street and part of the curb and it's a reminder not only to the vehicles but to the people on the sidewalks. Like I need to be a little more careful because I'm in the red zone and cars go faster here. I'm in a blue zone. Has there been discussion about maybe adding a color coded system to the speed program in?

>> We have looked at, you know, what is allowable, the consistent sign, you know, if you see a sign citywide and you know it should be consistent in manner, but we have some flexibility to add, for example, like a colored border around a speed limit sign. You know, red is probably the most common one you might see. Not too much around Austin, but there are other red-bordered signs in other parts of the country. That's one thing we did consider. I don't know if we necessarily considered necessarily a color

[10:48:35 AM]

corresponding to the certain speed limits, but it's certainly something we can consider as we develop our design of signs.

>> Garza: Okay, I was able to Google a couple of studies and most of them from Europe and it talks about color coding and how they were able to tell additional reminders for people, it's not just a number, additional sub conscious reminders was helpful in reducing speeds.

>> Yeah, certainly the people aren't always conscious what the street is telling them either through signs or design, but that's something we will look at and also consider what we're sort of allowed to -- under state laws and see what we can do to look at colors and other means on our signs.

>> Garza: Okay.

>> Kitchen: Councilmember Ellis?

>> Ellis: Yeah, I remember you saying about the streets that are wider than 36 feet that are not part of this, you know, more interior

[10:49:36 AM]

section of the city needing an evaluation to look at those more thoroughly. Is that something that is already in the planning phase? I apologize if you answered this in someone else's question or is it going to be a street by street basis. I have a lot of streets in my district wider than 36 feet and I want to make sure they are getting -- I understand the scheduling process if people are wanting to know when those are going to be evaluated and how that's going to work.

>> Sure. Yeah, in general those greater than 36 feet wide per our recommendation where we landed on those is that based on our data and people are already traveling closer to 25 or maybe just a little over 30, you know, as street widths do get wider to approximately 40 feet, that's when we do really see an increase in speed and just that discrepancy, potentially between a 25-mile-an-hour signed street and people going much

[10:50:37 AM]

faster than that. That's where why we felt comfortable 36 feet and less was sort of a blanket statement, those should be 25. Those greater than 36 feet wide, as we look at deploying the 25-mile-an-hour signs, we'll probably do it, I don't know if it will be neighborhood by neighborhood or based on high injury network. We'll take a set of streets, I think during that time we'll be able to look at those streets greater than 36 feet wide and really take a close look and see if 25-mile-an-hour speed limit is appropriate and/or appropriate with some other level of work whether it be additional traffic calming for traffic devices, some other things we can do to actually supplement a 25-mile-an-hour speed limit.

>> Ellis: I really appreciate that and it may be helpful to connect off

[10:51:37 AM]

line, but there's a lot of streets especially near the Y at oak hill viewed as cut-through, scenic hill and convict hill and I want to make sure that -- that that's getting a fair level of attention because people are driving at very high speeds through neighborhoods with a lot of driveways. But also could you share the maps with us in either gis or something like that so we can drill down exactly what streets. We can zoom

into the downtown area pretty well, but when we get more on the outskirts of town and outer portions of district 8, it's kind of hard to tell exactly where the injuries are happening and we would like to evaluate what already may be on radar for mobility bonds. Some of these intersections are already being planned in the works so I just want to get a better grasp on that. But definitely appreciate the work and I'm happy to drill down more into what district 8 needs might look like.

>> Okay.

[10:52:38 AM]

Thank you, councilmember. And we'll look at what's available to share.

>> Kitchen: Okay. So thank you all. Just in closing, I would just reiterate what my colleagues have been saying, I would really like to understand and perhaps you can give us something more formal by June 11th. I would like to understand the time line for two things, as councilmember Flannigan talked about. That's understanding how and when you are going to evaluate those more major streets outside the urban core and then the second is councilmember Ellis said the residential streets that are more than 36 feet. So I think from our perspective we're hearing from folks from different parts of the city and all of us represent areas that are outside the central core and you are hearing the need that we are aware of and see in our communities, in our districts to cover the whole

[10:53:38 AM]

city. So would really like something more definitive in terms of a time line. And then I think the maps also that councilmember Ellis asked for would be very helpful for us because we can help you with -- I know all of you guys have been doing to share specifics on streets. So thank you all very much. This is very exciting. I think that -- I look forward to supporting it on the 11th and I really appreciate all the work. So we're now going to move on to our second item, and that is the b-cycle bikeshare program update. And thanks for joining us, mayor Adler. I can see that you've joined us.

>> Thank you, councilmember kitchen. Thank you, council members.

[10:54:40 AM]

Can you hear me?

>> Kitchen: We're hear you but we're not seeing the presentation.

>> [Inaudible] Pgh >>

>> Kitchen: You are a little muffled.

>> How is this?

>> Kitchen: It's still a little low. Can everyone hear him? Yeah, if you could speak up. Pardon?

>> I will definitely speak from my diaphragm.

>> Kitchen: That is just better what you just said.

-- Much better what you just said.

>> Councilmember kitchen, if you can let me know when you have the slides in front of you.

>> Kitchen: We have them up now.

>> Okay, great. I'll get started. Thank you for your time today. I appreciate everyone being here to get an update on the b-cycle system.

[10:55:40 AM]

What I'm going to brief you on is how the b-cycle system

[inaudible] During our stay home, work safe order. And some of the other things we've been working on since October with capital metro as it relates to the future of the bikeshare program in Austin. I'm joined today with my colleagues from capital metro Chad Ballentine and

[inaudible] In case we have questions for cap metro. Next slide, please. During our stay home, work safe order has been a very needed essential service for a lot of essential employees. We noticed that many people were utilizing the system during our stay home, work safe orders in order to handle the --  
[inaudible]

[10:56:41 AM]

These are people who were frontline staff at hospitals and other places that were in need of a -- an evergreen type of mobility option in order to get to work. That asset has remained in operation and we're taking extra steps to maintain a clean and sanitized system. Currently there are 500 standard bikes, 200e-bikes that are on part of a pilot program, and 75 current

[inaudible] In existence in Austin. Next slide, please. As part of the covid response, the increased frequently of cleaning and disinfecting of all the bikes and work places began going into effect. Our partners in bicycle share of Austin has been

[10:57:43 AM]

using protective members themselves to maintain -- while they sanitize this much needed public asset. We've also offered discounted annual passes for the local stay at homework order and community members making essential trips. Next slide, please. Like many mobility options during this pandemic we've seen a reduction as we went into our stay home and stay safe work orders. As you can see we've been managing and looking at performance by numbers so we can week over week understand how the system is gaining back a level of sustainability. As you can see there, we're beginning to see an increase in the number of trips, the number of trips per bike as well. Next slide, please.

[10:58:48 AM]

Next slide, please. These numbers are not different from what trek has been seeing nationally. Trek has been a great partner for the city of Austin to see what's happening in on a larger scale within the nation, as well as what's happening in our local marketplace. As you can see there, there's a starkly big difference in trips from last year to this year. But what's nice to see is those numbers, both nationally and locally, are synergistic. We're seeing the recovery of that system. And more people using it than before. Next slide, please. Top in fact, as part of that, in our work with trek bicycles, their executive director, as you can see in this quote, are seeing some amazing ridership increases as people are mobile in a safe

[10:59:50 AM]

environment, and also fulfill the recreational need to get people out and get some air, in a way that allows for social separation and social distancing. Next slide, please. Now, as far as the conversion of the fleet to e-bikes, that's really what we're here to brief you guys on, outside of how the system has been operating in our current condition. We started off with 10 e-bikes in 2019, and from not 10 e-bikes, we noticed that there was a starkly different level of usage of those e-bikes than of the pedal bikes. We then worked with trek to start the 200 e-bike program, which is coming to a close. Those 200 e-bikes are currently in market, but we do need to decide on how we're going to move forward with transitioning the fleet to an electric bike program. As you can see there, we saw

[11:00:51 AM]

a four and a half times ridership compared to the pedal bikes, and that's something trek is also seeing nationally where existing pedal bikes have converted to an e-bike program. And then lastly, as you can see there in the picture, trek has also come out with a new type of dock which allows us to place docks in a more dynamic manner, so they don't necessarily have to fit one of the two size configurations that

we see today in Austin landscape, and that also allows that size to be more appropriately placed into the current built environment, which as we know, is getting tight. So it will fit in a lot more places. And we see this as a direct corollary to how e-bikes can offer transit incentives and first-mile, last-mile deep into a community because

[11:01:52 AM]

these particular stations don't require necessarily the same amount of land space in order to dock a bike. Next slide, please. As I mentioned earlier, we've been partnering with capmetro since October, specifically on a partnership around the b-cycle system. As part of that, we saw -- and thank you, councilmembers, for approving a previous maintenance order on the cell phone bills and other things related to the kiosk stations. In return, capmetro is investing in their app program and their fare system to include b-cycle trips as a part of that ability to stitch together a complete trip for the first time in Austin between b-cycle and other capital metro assets. As part of that, capital

[11:02:52 AM]

metro would like to rebrand the system as metro bike. Next slide, please. This is our last slide and I'll begin opening up for questions. Our next steps, as you're aware, are to move through with an ioa which is up for consideration on June 4th, to run a mutual beneficial partnership between the city of Austin and the capital metro to co-manage and expand the existing b-cycle fleet and system. And to do that in partnership with bicycle share of Austin, which remains a nonprofit, on the ground operator to operate the system. Capital metro would like to leverage the b-cycle system in order to stitch it closer to enabling transit, so we are looking at the possibility of moving stations in order to better accommodate full trip usage. And then lastly, capmetro has applied for the grant in

[11:03:53 AM]

which the city of Austin atv is a supporting partner of that grant, where if selected by the federal transit administration, it would be monies that would assist us with the full conversion of the fleet. But that's not necessarily what the partnership would like to wait on. What you'll see on June 4th will be a consideration of being able to at least convert the existing 200 e-bikes in town to electric, and so we want to get started with the partnership and not wait on federal monies in order to enable our work here locally. And with that, I'd like to open it up for questions.

>> Kitchen: Okay. Thank you very much. For this. I can say I'm excited about two aspects of this, the conversion to e-bikes and the plan for further conversion over time.

[11:04:56 AM]

I'm hopefully about that grant. Then I'm thankful that the partnership -- actually, it's not a partnership, the Ila with capmetro with integrate with their system and also provide some management oversight, if I'm understanding correctly, of the b-cycle program and tie that closer to the -- to, you know, a full systemwide plan to assist with first and last mile. That seems very promising to me. So thank you for that presentation. Do we have questions for folks? Councilmember Flannigan.

>> Flannigan: Can you explain the Ila, the relationship between the city and capmetro moving forward in a little more detail? Like in terms of, like, are we doing an ioa that just basically gives capmetro control and they're making all the decisions, or is it

[11:05:56 AM]

more of a partnership?

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you, councilmember Flannigan. It is a partnership. We are actually creating a governing committee between Chad's group and my group related to how we co-manage the asset. If you can imagine, like councilmember kitchen alluded to, if we are able to realign certain stations with out of transit in more of a defined manner, it probably means providing different right away permits that the city of Austin would have control over, specifically those around parking and other things, as well within atb, and capital metro within operations perspective. So we are looking at this as a come-in, we both provide an equal amount of support in supporting this system,

[11:06:56 AM]

but from a current built environment and expansion perspective and looking to move towards eventually a one and a half times size of the fleet we have today -- we're currently a little over 500 bikes and we'd like to get to about 800 bikes, and do so in a coordinated fashion through a new type of committee that we would stand up between both organizations. It would also include some folks from bicycle share of Austin, of course, being the local nonprofit that's actually doing the boots on groundwork.

>> Flannigan: I'll -- let's talk more about that offline, I want to make sure that we're looking at system growth that can not just be where there's transit service because there might be areas of the city that we want to have this option because they don't have transit service. And so that conversation is

[11:07:56 AM]

going to be kind of important for me.

>> Mayor Adler: Understood. And we can --

>> Kitchen: Thank you, councilmember Flannigan. I couldn't agree more to that. So councilmember Ellis?

>> Ellis: Yeah, I'm really excited about this because I think it's really important that these systems be integrated. I think that making sure that the bikes are available where the buses stop and where the trains stop is a really important part of this piece, like chair kitchen had said, that first-mile, last-mile piece is really important to this network. And I also want to mention that I would like to see a little more deep dive into something like a day pass. The way that it's working right now is that you have to continually dock your bike every hour or you get charged overages, so I really want to see a more fluid system where people can be able to just use it for what they need it for

[11:08:56 AM]

and be able to return it when they're going to return it and have a more predictable pricing structure in that. And I think also the discussion around bike parking and storage availability is important as well because there are some people who would use other capmetro services, using their own bike, and I think that could help fund more of the comprehensive system if we're making that piece of it a bit better. I've seen in Seattle, there's bike parking lots where they're -- you know, you have your key -- or you have your code and you have a little more available storage than what I've seen on the ground in Austin, and that's not necessarily a b-cycle or a capmetro issue, but I just think, generally, we need more predictable places to be able to have bicycle parking. But those are some of the thoughts that I keep rolling around, is how to make sure the bikes are available when you get off the bus or get off the train, if you don't have your own, and then making sure that we have that infrastructure available. It would be amazing one day

[11:09:56 AM]

to have one of those huge bike parking garages where you just see hundreds of bikes. And I hope to get there one day. It's not going to be this year, but that is something that I would really, really want to see eventually.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you, councilmember Ellis.

>> Kitchen: Like Amsterdam, huh, councilmember Ellis?

>> Ellis: Yeah. There are lots of places

--trying to do that I think people would be excited about it just because the parking lot is so cool.

>> Kitchen: Yeah. Councilmember alter?

>> Alter: Hi. Thank you. So I agree with the need for this to be able to be used where it's off transit, but I think part of it, since it is for that last mile or whatever, it's deliberately thought of in that way. I wanted to ask you to speak a little bit to the b-cycle nonprofit and how it's impacted by the Ila.

[11:10:57 AM]

They have made a lot of adjustments and designed their model about their partnership with the city, and have been with us through thick and thin. I just want to make sure that this model is being embraced by them or is working to support their efforts as well.

>> Mayor Adler: Absolutely. The bicycle share team, as well as the board, have been part of this process. We've got different conversations with them throughout -- throughout our planning efforts. As of -- as of the current stage of the term sheets that we're working back and forth between us and capmetro as we prepare for this negotiation, we are trying to maintain the classic share structure as it currently exists. We're not looking to change that anytime in the future, at the current time.

[11:11:59 AM]

It does -- thank you, councilmember alter, there's some -- a good harkening back to some local leaders within this community who saw the division of creating a city-owned bicycle share system that would help us begin to get off of car dependency and seek some of the sustainable practices and, thus, some of the key performance indicators began to show related to our ability to clean our air. So without making - - without making too many waves, we're not looking to try to change too much of the current operation structure. This will be a long-term agreement between atd and capital metro and the city, related to the b-cycle asset. We're looking for a 40-year Ila term with a possibility of a three-year renewal.

[11:13:00 AM]

That gives us enough time to properly begin managing the -- co-managing the system as we both begin separating some roles and responsibilities and doing so in a more cohesive manner, to do that without bicycle share of Austin being part of that would be detrimental to the service of the community, so we want to make sure they are part of this. In fact, prior to the council meeting, we're having a touch point with the bsa board, just to go

--to go over any last-minute touch points before the council session on June 4th.

>> Alter: Thank you. And can you also speak to the federal funding opportunities? I know there's one that was mentioned. Are there other ones that we are looking to for this?

>> Mayor Adler: There are. Related to funding, I think we do have many options available to us, and especially in the coming years.

[11:14:00 AM]

As you begin seeing a lot more electrification, community-based, sustainable grants come out of different federal departments. Currently this one is a federal travel administration grant. This is an aim grant, I'm not going to go through the acronym, but it's ways to help mobility through travel enhancement. The e-bike fleet for us is a unique opportunity for fta to help us do that process and it's something we believe fta would be interested in helping us with, so we're confident that we'll be at least making it there you the first round of selection with that and hopefully seeing a positive response from fta. As far as other grants go, my office is in contact with the vehicle technology office of the department of energy. And one of the things that

[11:15:02 AM]

the department of energy is getting through some passed omnibus money is the ability to look at more localized electrification outside of electric vehicles, autos, to be exact, so it's a non-auto-centric program that is going to possible be getting started in the coming year. There's plenty of others that we're tracking that could also fit the need, especially for other parts of the b-cycle system, not necessarily capital infrastructure, but also punts for us to do more -- the opportunity for us to do more outreach for the community, for more modes of accessible -- providing a means and methods for everyone to get around.

>> Ellis: Thank you so much.

>> Kitchen: Any further questions from anyone?

[11:16:03 AM]

Okay. Thank you very much. Oh, councilmember Flannigan, did you have a question? No? Okay. All right. Thank you very much. We'll look forward to -- to the June 4th item, and I'll look forward to supporting that. So we're now on our last item, and that is an update on project connect, including changes to the system plan recommendation and ongoing community engagement. So if we have staff here, we're ready for that.

>> Good morning, committee, chair kitchen, and mayor Adler. Dave couch, program officer for capital projects at capital metro for project connect. It's a pleasure this morning to go ahead and give you an update on the progress we've made since our presentation on March the 9th, and moving up towards the next joint committee meeting on June the 10th. Second slide, please.

[11:17:04 AM]

This gives us the overall view of where we've been and where we're going in terms of the start that we had back prior to December of 2019, with the first meeting actually starting in August of 2018. Over that time, there have been a series of joint meetings, and we're looking right now in approaching the next meeting, which will be June the 10th. I'll go into this later in more detail when we get later in the presentation. Next slide, please. As we move forward, there have been a series of community meetings. Each one of them has occurred between the 15th and the 21st. We have already had participation by the mayor, and we've also had participation as we go forward, looking to do things with basically three more meetings that we've got scheduled. Councilmember kitchen and councilmember Ellis are scheduled for the 28th, so

[11:18:05 AM]

that's later today. And then actually the last meeting is tomorrow at 2:00. So that includes and completes the series of meetings. I think they have been very good, they've been very interactive. We've had a lot of good questions and a lot of participation. The other thing that we're doing in parallel is that we have set up a virtual open house, and we have taken that and set it so it's the same type of information and format, just electronically, as we would have had if we were doing the in-person open houses. That has been up since the 7th of may, and it will be closing on this Sunday, the 31st. So we've got comments that are coming in, great comments from that, as well as a lot of good questions and comments as we've gone through the virtual community meeting. Next slide, please. Overall, project connect involves going ahead and

[11:19:06 AM]

getting to that high frequency, high capacity program. The map on the right is basically what we would be coming forward with on the 10th, to be able to to go ahead and get the approval of that overall system map, and then individual locally preferred alternatives that are within it. I'll go into that in a little more detail on the following slides. What I'd like to do right now is tee up a video that we've developed. If we could go ahead and do that, please.

[Video playing]

>> Traffic can be overwhelming and with the city's projected growth, we need more options. Project connect creates an expanded regional network to benefit us all and it's built with the future in mind. We're expanding current transit services and making them more convenient and easier to use. That means more service for us all, with improvements to local bus service, more investments in accessibility, seven new metro rapid routes, and 24

[11:20:08 AM]

regional park & rides to connect customers into the system. Neighborhood circulators like pickup provide quick trips, connect to traditional transportation options and improve accessibility. Multiple light rail lines will allow the system to move more people with greater speed and reliability. And using transit will be even simpler, with your smartphones or smart fare cards, you can plan trips and pay for Farris. Plus future integrations to pay for and reserve parking, bike rentals and other smart city options. Capital metro is committed to helping central Texas become a cleaner, healthier place by moving toward an all-electric zero emissions fleet. It's time to create more options for moving to our growing city. Capital metro project connect, it's go time.

[End of video.]

>> Okay. I'd like to go ahead and move to the next slide, slide number 6, which is really the info slide with what we'll be coming back on

[11:21:10 AM]

the 10th with a recommended system plan. Slide number 7, this shows on the right what that recommended system plan, and one of the keys that's there is being able to have a whole series of

[indiscernible] Is the second video in the tunnel queued up?

>> It's ready to go. Are you ready for it?

>> Yeah, please. Go ahead.

[Video playing]

[11:23:22 AM]

>> Okay. If we could go to slide number 7, please. This represents on the right-hand side what the overall system map that we'll be coming in to be presented on the 10th. One of the keys to it is basically the connections that are there. You see that the symbol on the left-hand side -- and this is one that

would be at the convention center -- shows that that location, you would be able to connect to both commuter rail lines, both the red and also the green. The blue line will be coming in from the airport. The gold line that will be coming down from ACC highland, and then a series of metrorapidines, the same as we have in principle that are currently running on the 801 and the 803. So that is one of the main connection points for the system, and that's the benefit that you get as you start to take each one of these separate types and modes, bring them together to go ahead and allow that

[11:24:23 AM]

conveyance from the outer areas and bring into the higher capacity core. Next slide, please. What we've done since March the 9th is taken into account the 2045 changes in demographics that have come from the campo model. When we originally ran everything to go ahead and look and determine what ridership was, we were using the approved 2040 model. So now that we've got the 2045, we've used that to go ahead and do an analysis basically of what we've got for the gold line, that originally was expected to be metrorapid or brt. And as a result of that analysis with the ridership that is developed and with the growth in the area both from a housing standpoint and from the hospital district, the number of projections there are there for the ridership has increased to the point that

[11:25:23 AM]

the recommendation justifies going ahead and going to a light rail system. We've also looked at the red line. And we've considered where things are in terms of ridership, in terms of what the projections are. And there were two phases within the program that we presented back on March the 9th. The first phase of that was more passing tracks, double tracks, to be able to bring the frequency down to a 15-minute service, as opposed to a 20-minute frequency, and also looking at the areas where there would be two additional stations. So we take into account decreasing the frequency from 20 minutes down to 15 minutes, and also the good connection that's going to be there when you look at the crestview area. At crestview, once the Orange line is operating, that will give people a choice that they would be able to continue on the red line down into the area where the convention center

[11:26:24 AM]

is, or they'd have the ability to switch to the Orange line, which would bring them back into the area down Guadalupe, down into the area that is republic square. So it's another choice that is there, and it's another way that the ridership starts to share and starts to look at different ways for people to go ahead and get to their destination. Next slide, please. When you look at what the in a financial aspect, compared to previously, going ahead and using the light rail and being able to net from that both the

concepts of brt and the second phase of the red line, it basically comes up to a difference that's there of about \$120 million. If we're looking at a 50% share from the federal

[11:27:25 AM]

process, from fta, and 50 is -- we're in that range of 45 to 50, what it would translate to is that for the local match, it would be an increase of about \$60 million. And that would be able to give you the light rail system that would be there from ACC highland down through the university and down to the convention center. On the operations side, there is the same approach. It is a net that's there, and that net that's there on an o&m side is basically an additional hundred thousand dollars per year. Next slide, please. As we've gone through the evolution of the gold line, we started with something that was basically a u-shape, that would start at ACC highland and go around to crestview. As we've gone through that and looked at that and have

[11:28:26 AM]

looked at --

>> Kitchen: Excuse me a minute, Dave. Excuse me a minute. Can you back up the slides that are showing? Because he's talking about slide 10. Thanks.

>> Which slide would you like to go back to?

>> Kitchen: You were speaking to slide 10, but what was showing to us was slide 11. So please go ahead and explain the gold route as you were saying.

>> Okay. I'm sorry. I haven't got visibility of slides. I'm working off a hard copy. I apologize. As we have gone forward and looked at what is there and what the original concept was and what we were asked to review by the board, we basically had a u-shaped line that was the gold line that was going to go from crestview around to ACC highland. As we've moved forward and looked at what the potential is and looked, as I said a few minutes ago, as what the 2045 demographics are, it basically takes it to the

[11:29:26 AM]

point that utilizing that as lrt provides what the needed capacity will be in the future. Just like the way that we have gone and looked at what we call interoperability, on two different tracks, in downtown across 4th street and up Guadalupe to get to the north Lamar transit center, we have the same capability with doing light rail from going from ACC highland down to the convention center, across fourth street, and then instead of turning to the north like the blue line would be doing, turn to the

south to go ahead and get down to our other main transit center, the south congress transit center. So that gives us that additional capability. One of the keys that's there is, by having both the gold and the blue line on the

[11:30:28 AM]

Orange line, it allows us to go ahead and make a greater frequency, to decrease it, if you will, down to a five-minute frequency, from what would be 10 minutes if the Orange line was operating on its own. It also provides traces for people to go ahead and have some places, a single seat ride. It's more convenient. So it is a way that from not only a capital standpoint but also an operational standpoint, it gives a tremendous amount of frequency. Next slide, please. I'll get into a little more detail of the near future. We're looking at coming to a joint session of city council and the board on the 10th of June, and then followed in the month of July for the city, looking at the budget process and

[11:31:31 AM]

conducting hearings, and also for capital metro, going through their budget process, so that would get us to the point that the budgets are aligned and brings us to the next step in the process, which would be, in August, with a potential action by the city council, to go ahead and determine if there would be a referendum that would go on the November ballot. That gives us where we are with a path forward. It's a little more detailed on that last slide. And I would be glad to answer any questions that are there.

>> Kitchen: Thank you, Dave. Thank you for that update for everyone. I know that about half of us so far have had the opportunity to participate in these -- these project connect engagement meetings. Councilmember Ellis and I will be doing ours this afternoon -- or actually, it's early evening, I guess, and I know the mayor pro tem is scheduled for tomorrow.

[11:32:32 AM]

So let me see if anyone has any questions. Anybody have anything they'd like to say or any questions? Any comments you'd like to share, councilmember Flannigan, or councilmember alter or the mayor on engagement meetings you had?

>> Flannigan: I'll just add, we had a pretty good one in -- with me. You know, it's odd to talk about it because we used to talk about these things geographically, but literally anyone can participate.

>> Kitchen: Uh-huh.

>> Flannigan: But I was joined by mayor hill from Leander and [indiscernible] From Williamson county. So it did have a northwest feel to it. And I was really pleased to see the community engagement on that and the pretty broad agreement that the plan is the right plan. There's obviously a lot of questions about how things are going to get funded and we'll be digging into that in short order.

[11:33:32 AM]

But I do think it's important to kind of put a pin in this. The city has been arguing over transportation investments since before any of us were even born, and you can go back into history, in the statesman archives, and find those debates. We finally have a place where it feels like there's consensus on the plan. How we -- the speed at which we build it and the money it's going to take to do it are going to be debates, but it is important to note that in a city that could never agree on a plan, it seems like that we have a plan we can agree on. And I'm very excited about that, and I was especially excited to see that same consensus coming from my friends north of the city, out of Leander and Williamson county who are also passionate supporters of where we've been and where we're headed.

>> Kitchen: Thank you, councilmember Flannigan. I would echo that understand a say that one thing really exciting about the plan to

[11:34:33 AM]

me is the fact that it truly is a system, and it truly looks at options for people all across the city. As we saw on the video, we were talking about bus improvements, we were talking about bus rapid transit, we're talking about this pickup service that operates as a circulator in neighborhoods where you can get picked up and brought to a transit line. We've just had a conversation about b-cycle and the ability to integrate that with transit. And then of course we have some exciting opportunities for rail, for light rail. And then, you know, we can't forget the ease in the ticketing process. So I like the way that you put that. It's time to recognize that we have agreement like we haven't ever had before in a systemwide plan that really offers options to everyone.

[11:35:33 AM]

So -- [audio difficulties] -- Mayor, I see, did you want to add something?

>> Mayor Adler: Yeah, I was just going to say that I agree with everything that you said. I think one of the reasons there is agreement is because we finally have a system. And the system has all the attributes that you discussed, including being one that's an incredibly equitable layout, it's getting to the people that most need the real opportunity and access to everything that's happening in the city. And I like that we're looking just to approve the plan as a component and then looking at what happens next, as

councilmember Flannigan pointed out. But I'm happy that we're having that conversation because while we're focused on the virus and the immediate response to that, the economy and the health crisis, we will come out of this. And when we come out of this as a city, we will have to have a conversation about who we are when we come out

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of this, and what are we aspiring to in terms of fixing decades-old problems and challenges. So I'm real excited about this as well.

>> Kitchen: And I would echo that, mayor. I think that we're starting to see conversations around the country about what recovery looks like from an economic standpoint. And one of the things that we can't forget is that -- and it's time to invest in a better future. And I think that we have to remember that the potential for the kinds of investments that we'll be talking about in July and August is -- does translate into jobs for our community. And so there's a potential economic win for us, in addition to the -- in addition to the improvements from a transportation standpoint. So I'm looking forward to our conversations, first in terms of approving this plan, system plan, but then

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also our conversations in July and August. So I think -- oh, councilmember alter? You want to go --

>> Alter: Thank you. I just want to clarify. So in June, we're being asked to approve the plan, and then over the summer we will be putting to the voters a choice on the funding. Is that correct?

>> Kitchen: No, we put -- the voter choice comes if, as a council, we decide to put an item on the ballot, but we do have further input from voters and the public in July as part of our conversations on our budget process. And then we'll have a conversation in August about what might go on the ballot. So the continued -- the continued input from the public is absolutely essential. We have to understand what people want, what people are thinking in terms of an

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investment, but the actual vote doesn't occur until and unless the council decides to put an item on the ballot.

>> Alter: Thank you. I don't think we were disagreeing. I appreciate the greater clarity of how you put that. I did want to kind of -- you know, as we're having the conversation about the plan and as we're

talking about the next steps, I think for transparency sake, we need to have a conversation of how covid -- how covid changes how we think about things.

>> Kitchen: Uh-huh.

>> Alter: And there's a lot of different directions that that can go, but I think avoiding that conversation doesn't help us to get to a point to put a choice before the voters that they -- that they can feel positive about. And it may be -- you know, may may be too early to have that conversation, but I think we need to have that conversation head-on, because there's lots of

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different things that feed into how we might think about how covid impacts the decision on multiple dimensions. And they're not obvious solutions, and it moves in lots of different directions, but I think we would be better served by having that conversation in an open and up-front way, rather than not having it.

>> Kitchen: I would absolutely agree and we're scheduled to do that. I mean, we will have conversations in August and July. We can certainly have any conversations people want to have at our June 10th meeting when we're scheduled to vote on the -- on the system plan itself. So --

>> Alter: There are ways that the system plan is potentially impacted that we need to at least talk through, whether we change anything or not. I think it's important that we have those conversations.

>> Kitchen: Does anybody else have any questions or comments?

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Councilmember Ellis?

>> Ellis: Yeah, I'll just go ahead and take the opportunity to add my input. I think the system plan is good and, you know, touches a lot of parts of town. And it's important to keep in mind through this process that we are vastly behind schedule, when you look at cities of similar size and how they're able to move people physically and efficiently. I'm excited about the electrification. You know, I like making sure we're using clean forms of energy because, you know, even if this is unanimously approved by all voters, there's an understanding of the time it's going to take to do the environmental process and the construction to make sure that it's done, and so we need to kind of look in the future and realize, where are we going to be, you know, even when we get to this point of being able to ride light rail, how much more population will be in our city, how much more tires are going to be on the road, and I think it's really

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important to keep that timeline in perspective of what a big project that it is. It's a very exciting project, and we need to be much more nimble and creative about moving people quicker and safer. We just had a discussion about high injury network as part of this conversation on another topic. And I think it's really important to keep that in mind, about how much safer it's going to be for high injury, how we're going to get to lower that number, and how we're going to be able to protect our environment and make sure we're resilient to climate change through this process. I think that's an important perspective to keep in mind as we're moving through this. But I am excited about the plan and look forward to future conversations about how it actually looks and what are the exact parameters of funding and really locking those things down in the coming weeks.

>> Kitchen: Thank you. Mayor pro tem.

>> Garza: Yeah, I'll just

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add, it's -- you know, obviously, this pandemic has been incredibly unfortunate and -- and rough on many in our community. It's been interesting to see, as we visited other cities, you know, to prepare for project connect, we saw the different ways they approached, you know, successfully passing bond measures like -- important bond measures that address transit, and many of them -- it's interesting that other cities would emphasize the job aspect of it, and we would think, oh, well, we -- it's not -- we don't have that problem in Austin, our unemployment was so low. It's interesting how now we are in a position where it will be -- it will be providing jobs. So, you know -- in need of right now. So I think -- I just wanted to make that observation, how, you know, we were in a position -- and, you know, we often talk about families becoming one -- you know, this crisis has changed so many things, and we're

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hearing companies are now saying that people can work from home more because they are able to tell that you can, and we talk about families becoming one-car families. And I think all of these kind of factors together would really get us closer to that because when -- you know, my family needs two cars because we go to two different jobs and child care and all that kind of stuff, and now we're in a situation where it would really seem more feasible for our family to have one car. And that is savings for families, when they can really just have one vehicle. So I think this -- you know, this is an added, I guess, silver lining to a real tough time in that we can -- we can save families some money in this time and really could create more one-car families, with a better transit system, you have to have a better transit system, but with a change in people's realities

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in that there will be -- there will be people working from home more, even after this is -- because companies are going to realize they're going to save a lot of money with not having to -- you know, office space and utilities, and it's -- you know, hopefully they also add a subsidy to families, you know, having to pay for internet at home and all that kind of stuff. Anyway, I just wanted to make that observation.

>> Kitchen: Yes. Thank you. And when you combine that with a system, transportation system, with transit, that makes it really possible for people to have less cars because they have more options, and that option includes a system that really works for everyone. So thanks, everybody. Does anyone want to say anything else before we close? We do have a final agenda item, if anyone it is to speak to this. We can also talk about it offline. If anyone wants to highlight an item for a future agenda? Does anybody have anything

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they want to add? Okay. All right. Well, thank you all very much. And thanks to our speakers and all of our presenters. So we're going to adjourn the monthly committee meeting at 11:45.